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GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT COMPLIANCE FORUM HOSTS 2017 VENDOR FAIR

Procurement Event Promotes Continued Transparency, Increased Competition and Participation

The Government Procurement Compliance (GPC) Forum, a strategic partnership of over 30 government agencies and non-profit assist agencies representing small business, today hosted the 2017 Vendor Fair drawing over 1,000 participants representing contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers of all sizes and specialties. This is the second year the GPC Forum has hosted the Vendor Fair and continued the expansion of information and resources for the vendor community. The GPC Forum was created under the leadership of Mayor Rahm Emanuel in January 2014 to drive bold, cross-agency improvements to make the region a benchmark for procurement, certification, and compliance processes that are streamlined, standardized, equitable and transparent.

"The GPC Forum is an example of the importance of collaboration with other government agencies to make an impact on the City of Chicago and the regional economy," said Mayor Emanuel, "Creating a world-class procurement process is an important step in our larger goal of supporting our small businesses and creating a more efficient and accountable government."

This year's Vendor Fair included new resources for the vendor community. 120 exhibitors were featured, including government agencies, non-profit assist agencies, veterans organizations, trade unions, and financial institutions. Additionally, this year's Vendor Fair featured over 15 prime contractors as exhibitors and participants in the inaugural PRIMES Connect, a matchmaking event to encourage networking of prime contractors with small, minority, and women-owned businesses.

"Outreach events like the Vendor Fair ensures continued fairness and transparency of the procurement process by hosting multiple agencies under one roof so attendees can have direct access with staff to ask questions regarding upcoming opportunities," said Chief Procurement Officer Jamie L. Rhee. "We want to ensure that small businesses and businesses owned by minorities and women have ample opportunities to compete and win

City contracts as well as establish a pipeline ensuring Chicago's diverse population is represented at the business table."

In addition to learning about contracting opportunities with government agencies, attendees had the opportunity to attend workshops comprised of a wide selection of topics such as: Doing Business with the City, County, Chicago Housing Authority, and Chicago Park District; Workforce Development; Resources for Veterans; and many more.

To help vendors plan ahead, the City issued a Consolidated Buying Plan. This special edition of the Buying Plan builds on the original City of Chicago Buying Plan and includes the upcoming contracting opportunities for the City as well as 12 additional government purchasing entities including: Chicago Board of Elections, City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago Housing Authority, Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Transit Authority, Public Building Commission, Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority, Cook County, Forest Preserves of Cook County, Illinois Tollway, and the State of Illinois. The City has issued 12 editions of the Buying Plan including three that are combined with multiple agencies.

This event is the latest in a series of efforts made by Mayor Emanuel to maintain transparency and increase opportunity for small businesses and MBEs/WBEs. These initiatives include the MBE/WBE Mentorship Program, Diversity Credit Program, the Small and Mid-Size Business Initiatives, and the Graduation Phase-out Program for MBEs/WBEs.

For more information on all upcoming outreach events and to download the current Buying Plan, visit www.2017vendorfair.com.

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